

COVER
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THE
HARMONY

OF

Satisfaction and Free Grace

IN THE

SALVATION OF SINNERS.

IN A

LETTER

TO

JOHN PINSENT, Senr.
of MORETONHAMPSTEAD;

OCCASIONED BY

A little Piece, entitled "Thoughts on Satisfaction;
and Free Grace asserted."

He that is of GOD HEARETH GOD'S WORDS.
JESUS CHRIST.

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T H E
H A R M O N Y, &c.

DEAR SIR,

I Received your favour, dated the 17th inst. enclosing a publication, entitled "*Thoughts on Satisfaction ; and Free Grace asserted ;*" and, at your request, have sent a Reply to it. May the Holy Spirit of Truth succeed it with a blessing ! Amen.

Our author seems, by his title, to consider satisfaction and free grace in the light of contraries ; which I shall attempt to shew is a mere fallacy ; for, if they be not united in a sinner's salvation, we must be saved, if saved at all, by *works*, and not by *grace*. Tho' his piece is so short, that you may read it, *deliberately*, in four or five minutes, yet it contains no small opposition to the glorious gospel of Christ. Had the writer appeared in the capacity of an enquirer after truth, one might have thought the performance large
A 2 enough ;

enough ; but he is quite decided on the subject ; and therefore concludes that a very few words are sufficient to produce a disciple in every reader. I judge so from his saying no more. Why he chose to conceal his *name*, with every thing else which might lead to a discovery, is not worth my while to enquire ; and therefore shall proceed to consider what he has to say.

According to my idea, sir, he appears to be a total stranger to the glory of the *divine character* ; the nature and design of the *law of God* ; the beauty and importance of the *everlasting gospel* ; the evil and desert of *sin* ; the depravity and moral impotence of *human nature* ; and the gracious *operations of the Holy Spirit*. This mighty author having, as he supposed, firmly established his opinion, like a victorious champion, utters this gratulatory exclamation :

“Hail, ye redeemed of the Lord !”

These few words quite overturn his Babel, and nobly plead the *union of satisfaction*
and

and free grace in the salvation of sinners. For this reason, I shall confine my thoughts chiefly to the ideas which this address contains. *Who* those redeemed are, or *from what* they are redeemed, he has not so much as offered to tell you. I will therefore endeavour to do it for him. Indeed, he does speak of them as the redeemed of *the Lord*; which, when duly considered, will abundantly confirm the doctrine he opposes.

I. There are *some* of mankind, who are the redeemed of the Lord. If not, he congratulates a people who have no existence. But here we both think alike. I said, *some* are redeemed; because *all men* are not thus described. But, *Who are they?* I said *not all men*; and Rev. v. 9. confirms my assertion. They are redeemed "OUT OF every kindred, and tongue, and "people, and nation." If every individual of the human race had been redeemed, this declaration would not be truth. It is both safe and necessary, therefore, to conclude, that *all* are not redeemed.

redeemed. Still you ask, *Who* are they? I might say, All the CHOSEN of God. But, at present, I would rather say, All who are the *called* of God---all who are led to despair of *saving themselves*---all who *flee to Christ*, as the great city of refuge; for all such are a "chosen generation, a royal "priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar "people; that they should shew forth the "praises of him who hath called them "out of darkness into his marvellous "light." 1 Pet. ii. 9. This leads me to observe,

II. *From what* they are redeemed. According to the Scriptures, they are redeemed from the "*curse* of the law." Gal. iii. 13. and delivered from the "*wrath* "to come." 1 Theff. i. 10. The curse of the law and the wrath to come explain each other. This is the desert of sin; and if this penalty due to sin be not borne by the great "*Surety of the better testament*," Heb. vii. 22. the sinner must sustain it in his own person. There is no alternative. This brings on the

III, Con-

III. Consideration ; namely, they are the redeemed of *the Lord*, that is, the Lord Jesus Christ. To him alone redemption is ascribed ; and by him alone the work is done. Now, the plain question is, *How* did the Lord redeem his people ? Not by “ the reformation of his creatures,” by their exercising any virtue or grace, nor even by shewing them a good example ; for then they would redeem themselves ; but “ *his own arm* ” brought salvation ; and of the people “ there were none with him.” Hence he is emphatically called **THE REDEEMER**. He redeemed them from the curse of the law, by being “ *made a curse for them.*” Gal. iii. 13. He “ *suffered*” the just for the unjust, that he might bring them to God. 1 Pet. iii. 18. He gave himself a “ *ransom*” for them. Matt. xx. 28. He gave himself “ *for them,*” that he might “ *redeem*” them from all iniquity. Tit. ii. 14. In a word, He “ *obtained*” eternal redemption for them, by putting away their sins by the “ *sacrifice*” of himself.

Heb.

Heb. ix. 12, 26. If this be not "*satisfaction*," that is, "a full and literal recompence *given* to divine justice for the offence," I am at a loss to say what is, or what the meaning of these passages can be. There can be no redemption without a suitable ransom or price; that price is the blood of Christ. Ye are redeemed with the "*precious blood of Christ*." 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. They sung a new song, saying, Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God "*by thy blood*." Rev. v. 9. Nor would that price be adequate to such a design, if it were not *satisfactory* to the demands of law and justice. Let me name,

IV. Some of the *effects* of this redemption or satisfaction. Such as,---1. *Reconciliation*. I mean now the reconciliation of God, *as lawgiver*, to the sinful creature; as well as the reconciliation of the *sinner* to his way of salvation, and his divine perfections and government. Hence we read, that our faithful and merciful high-priest hath made *reconciliation* for the sins of the people. Heb. ii. 17. That you,
who

who were sometime alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now he hath *reconciled*, in the body of his flesh, through death. Col. i. 21, 22. And, 2. The law is *fulfilled* and *satisfied* by the death of the cross. God hath sent forth his Son, made of a woman *made under the law*, to redeem them who were under the law. Gal. iv. 4, 5. There can be no redemption from under the law, without answering the claims of the law, let them be whatever they may. Then, 3. *Forgiveness of sin*. In whom (that is, Christ) we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. Col. i. 14. Pardon of sin comes to us *only* through the death of the gracious Mediator, God-Man. Once more, 4. *Peace with God, and nearness to him*; which, otherwise, we could never have enjoyed. But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were afar off are made; or brought *nigh*, by the blood of Christ; for he is *our peace*. Eph. ii. 13, 14. In the next place, I shall consider,

V. The *necessity* of redemption or satisfaction. It is necessary, 1. For the real

encouragement of the *praying sinner*. That guilty creatures are encouraged to call upon God for pardon and salvation is a pleasing truth ; but, in the Scriptures, that encouragement is entirely grounded on the redemption of Christ. The great Saviour says, I am the *way*, and the *truth*, and the *life*: no man cometh unto the Father *but by me*. John xiv. 6. And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, *believing*, ye shall receive. Matt. xxi. 22. Faith can have no object, or ground of dependence, in praying for the pardon of sin, or the mercy of God to be shewn him; but the divine promise in the cross of Christ. For this reason, the Lord declares that repentance and remission of sins should be preached *in his name*, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Luke xxiv. 47. What unworthy thoughts of God must that condemned sinner entertain, who approaches for mercy and forgiveness without a Mediator ! There is such a thing as *false peace*, Ezek. xiii. 10. ; and I am doubtful our author is the subject of it ; for he tells you, that he who preaches the
atonement

atonement or satisfaction of Christ “steals
 “away *his comfort*, and he knows not
 “where to find it.” The Lord hath by his
 promise and his oath given strong consolation---but, to *whom*? To those who have
 fled for refuge to lay hold on the *hope* set
 before them. Heb vi. 18. This *hope* is the
 Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Tim. i. 1. The apostle
 says, we joy in God---but, *how*? Why
 through our Lord Jesus Christ, *by whom*
 we have now received the atonement,
 reconciliation, or satisfaction. Rom. v. 11.
 The Holy Spirit is called THE COM-
 FORTER--- but, *how* does he comfort the
 the guilty conscience? The gracious
 Saviour shall answer for me. He shall
 glorify ME: for he shall *take of mine*, and
 shall *shew it unto you*. John xvi. 14. And,
 further, 2. *The glory of the divine character*,
 in forgiving sinners, renders the satisfaction
 of Christ necessary. Some folks are fond
 of talking about God’s making allowances
 for sin. This I consider as no less than a
 bold opposition to the very spirit and de-
 sign of the Gospel, and one of the fruits
 of an atheistical temper; for, if it can

be proved, that God makes allowance for *one* sin, it may be safely asserted, and very easily confirmed, that he ought not to punish *another*; because every sin is a violation of his law, and exposes to its penalty. If *one* sin may be forgiven, without regard had to the dignity of the divine *law*, the rights of the divine *government*, and the purity of the divine *nature*, so may *all* without exception; and then it will be impossible to justify the divine *conduct* in not forgiving sinners absolutely and universally. If the Lord Jesus Christ be not considered, in his sufferings, as the surety and substitute of his people, bearing their sins, and making satisfaction to law and justice for them; not this author, nor any other man, can give me a *reason* why he suffered at all. To introduce “a neighbour forgiving my debt,” on this subject, is so perfectly childish, that it hardly deserves notice; for what similarity is there between my *relation* to a neighbour and the Great Immortal God, my Righteous Lawgiver! What correspondence is there between the *character* of the
Holy

Holy and Blessed God and that of my neighbour! Not the least. But thus, it seems, we can allow ourselves to trifle with sacred things, to supply the place of scripture and solid argument. Nor,

VI. Is this redemption, or satisfaction, and free grace at all *inconsistent*. This writer says, "If God hath received recompence for the sins of men, then "grace is no more grace." What a pity but he had read and understood Paul's words in Eph. i. 7. ! In whom (that is, in Christ the Beloved) we have *redemption through his blood*, the forgiveness of sins, *according to the RICHES of his GRACE*. What a contrast between these two writers! One teaches, that the satisfaction or redemption of Christ is the *annihilation* of grace; the other asserts, not only the *display* of grace in that stupendous work, but even the *riches* of it. "Free grace" is no where, in scripture, opposed to the atonement or redemption of Christ; but only and always to human works, worth, or deservings; and therefore, if we are not pardoned freely, and saved eternally, by the grace of God, through

through the cross of Christ, we shall perish for ever. It was grace in the Father that appointed his Son to be the Mediator and Saviour of his body the church ; and sent him into the world to accomplish the great design. Herein is love ; not that we loved God, but that *he loved us*, and *sent* his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 1 John iv. 10. It was the same grace which led the Great Immanuel to *give* his life a ransom for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, says the Son of the Father ; I lay down my life for the sheep. John x. 11, 15. Christ hath *loved us*, says holy Paul, and hath *given himself* for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savour. Eph. v. 2. Nothing, surely, is free grace *to me*, if the remission of my sins, through the death of Christ, may not be so considered. Besides, Paul says, that God hath, for Christ's sake, *freely* forgiven his people their sins. Eph. iv. 32. See more on this subject in my Letters to Dr. Priestley, p. 252. I should think these few hints might suffice to prove, that, though "pardon is free," and "forgiveness
" is

“ is of grace ;” yet the blessing is never imparted but thro’ the atonement of Christ. And this also might discover the fallacy of the poor man’s idea of things---for, according to him, the satisfaction of Christ “ is *not* the doctrine of the Gospel ;” because we are said to be saved by grace ; and because eternal life is the gift of God. Can the Bible more clearly declare than it does already, that salvation and eternal life are displayed and possessed *alone* in and through the Lord, the Redeemer ? Hear the great apostle. He says, grace reigns *through righteousness* unto eternal life, BY Jesus Christ, our Lord. And that, eternal life is the gift of God *through* Jesus Christ, our Lord. Rom. v. 21. vi. 23. To oppose the redemption or satisfaction of Christ with a view to establish free grace, is acting in direct correspondence with the youth who brought the sun-dial to his Father in the parlour to know the time of day ; or with the man who excludes the sun from his house in order to increase his light and heat.

Here,

Here, fir, I might close my epistle ; but I must beg leave to detain you a few minutes, whilst I make the following remarks.

Remark I. According to his first setting out, he needs *instruction* respecting the law of God. Adam was evidently the covenant head of his posterity. " All sinned when Adam transgressed ;" or else *infants* could not be liable to death, as Rom. v. 12, 14.---nor could we be the children of wrath *by nature*, as Eph. ii. 3.---nor would it have been necessary for Christ to have been *made under the law*, that he might redeem his people, as Gal. iv. 4, 5. From hence it most plainly appears, that we all had a federal " being" in him. Adam and his posterity constituted one moral federal whole ; consequently his act was the act of all ; and the penalty incurred by him was incurred by all. And, not only so ; but all who look away from the satisfaction of Christ for pardon and salvation, do, in fact, treat it as a *covenant still in force*, seeing they expect salvation by their own works ; and not by the cross of Christ. Salvation by
works

works and grace can never be blended together. *This* is confined to the obedience and death of the Son of God; *that* to our supposed goodness and deservings.

Rem. II. And he also confounds things that are distinct; and then no wonder he forms false ideas, and draws false conclusions. He says, "If Christ be God, then he gave satisfaction to himself." He should have recollected, that divine righteousness, or justice, belongs to the Deity, *as such*; and not to the person of the Father, or Son, or Spirit separately; and this might have relieved the difficulty with him. For, according to this idea, there is no more absurdity in the Son's satisfying divine justice, in behalf of his people, in the character of their mediator and surety, than in the Father's requiring him to do so in that capacity. This was evidently required and given, that justice might honourably unite with grace in saving the chosen of God. The Lord Jesus Christ being a person in Deity as well as the Father and Spirit, and being set up as the representative of his body, the church;

when he made satisfaction to justice, in behalf of his people, in that character, he might be said to make satisfaction to himself, *as God*, as well as to the Father and Spirit ; because, as each person exists in *the same nature*, so divine righteousness, or justice, is essential to the nature in which they exist ; therefore satisfaction is common to all the divine persons, though more generally it is said to be given to the Father. Some people seem *willingly* inattentive to this necessary distinction, and therefore *designedly* pass it over ; but I would hope this is not the case with our author.

Rem. III. He is guilty of a similar blunder, in saying, that God “ cannot receive “ what he possesses already.” If he would be understood of God’s absolute nature, we agree ; if of his relative character, we widely differ---for it is manifest, that God, as a lawgiver, can *receive* satisfaction to his offended justice ; and this he cannot be said to *possess* before it is given. Had this natural and requisite distinction been made, I suppose, this wonderful performance had never appeared.

Rem. IV.

Rem. IV. In saying, "that God cannot receive any satisfaction, save that which arises from the reformation and happiness of his creatures," he is both *inconsistent* with himself and with the truth. *With himself*; because he had said, but four lines before, that "no creature can give any thing to God." Now, if God *derive* any satisfaction from the reformation and happiness of his creatures, it is demonstrable that he *receives* a somewhat which he had not before their reformation and happiness appeared; and it is *given* to him by his *creatures*; and in this satisfaction he must be increasing daily. He is no less repugnant to the *truth*. His words seem to imply, in my idea of them, as though it were a sort of felicity or gratification to the Deity, to see his creatures do well and live happily---which is much like saying, that the blessedness of God is finite, dependent, and derived; at least, in part. But let him hear Eliphaz of old, in Job xxii. 2, 3. Can a man be *profitable* unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable to himself? Is it any *pleasure* to the

Almighty, that thou art righteous? or is it *gain* to him, that thou makest thy ways perfect?---or let him read Elihu in Job. xxxv. 7. If thou be righteous, what *givest* thou him? or what *receiveth* he of thine hand?---or he may consult the joint address of the antient Levites to the Most High, in Neh. ix. 5. where they say, Blessed be thy glorious name, which is *exalted above* ALL blessing and praise. If *his* idea, therefore, of the divine satisfaction be “a truth
“ which common sense cannot help embracing,” it must be such common sense as is repugnant to *good sense* and the word of God--consequently to be deprecated and lamented, instead of being coveted or desired.

Rem. V. His conceptions of the “*attributes* of God” are as erroneous, as his ideas of the divine *nature* are gross and derogatory. That justice, mercy, and grace are attributes of Deity I allow; but none of *his* expressions concerning them will bear examination. He speaks thus of them.

“*Justice* tells a judge, thou shalt not inflict a punishment that is more than adequate to the offence.” It is *certain*, that
divine

divine justice never punishes *at all* without a reason, nor can possibly *exceed* the demerit of the crime; and therefore this suggestion might, and should, have been spared. But here he evidently refers to the satisfaction which Christ made for sin; and so would insinuate, that the *infinite* satisfaction of Christ is contrary to justice. This shews his want of understanding in the subject, or faith in the testimony of God; because the desert of sin is not be estimated by the *nature* of the sinner, but by the *infinite* glory of the offended lawgiver, and the *obligations* of the sinning creature. Excuse me, sir, if once more, merely to save room, I refer you to my Letters to Dr. Priestley. See p. 251. on *infinite satisfaction*.

“ Mercy says, thou shalt make it” (that is, the punishment) “ rather less; and
 “ even, when it is known that the sinner
 “ is reformed, forgive it.” No person can make this language comport with the mercy of God. God cannot, consistently with the perfection of his character, shew mercy at the expence of his justice. If punishment may be abated in order to shew
 mercy,

mercy, it must be so, either because the punishment, *in itself*, would be unjust ; or because it would be unjust to inflict *all* that was deserved. Neither of which can be admitted. All the attributes of the Deity are in harmony, both in his *nature* and his *administration*, however blind and confused our conceptions may be concerning them. The “reformation” of the sinner can never be proved to be the ground or reason of so much as an *abatement* of the deserved punishment ; much less a cause why the *whole* should be remitted.

“ *Grace or benevolence* adds, thou shalt “ bestow a favour on the offender, when “ he is brought to a sense of his folly.” How much this man speaks as though he thought the Almighty altogether such an one as himself ! A day of reproof is advancing. Ps. l. 21. Is benevolence, or well-wishing, *all* the meaning of the grace of God ? Does the Most High wish for what he cannot possess or perform ? What a wretched conception of Deity ! But, pray, *who* brings the offender to a sense of his folly ? Is it the creature, or God ? If
the

the offender does it *himself*, then he is before-hand with God, and lays him under obligation ; and consequently the divine bestowments, in that case, cannot be matter of *bounty* and *favour*, but of *real* debt ; and cannot, in justice, be withheld. If the *Lord* brings the offender to a sense of his folly, then I would ask, why this favour is not granted to *all* offenders. Let him consider these things seriously, like a man who fears God. In short, the grace of God is, properly speaking, no more nor less than his eternal good pleasure, or sovereign will, to make his chosen in Christ completely holy and happy. In consequence of which, they are made, *infallibly*, the partakers of, what we usually call, the blessings of GRACE in time, and of perfect GLORY in an eternal world. May this honour be conferred on our author, on you, and on the present writer, through the perfect satisfaction of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

If any public notice should be taken of this letter, I would wish the author to appear *openly* ; for if he have truth on his side,

side, he need not be afraid nor ashamed of his *name*. Nor would I have him forget, that, though he may write unknown to men, he is not unknown to God, to whom he must give an account of all his ways, and who is *The God of Truth*.

You are at full liberty, sir, to call what I have sent you a *very partial* view of the subject. Such it is. However, let it suffice for the present. It may be enlarged when it becomes necessary. Therefore, committing my letter and you to the blessing of our adorable Lord, and requesting a continued interest in your supplications to the divine throne, I remain,

Dear Sir,

Your's in Christ,

S. ROWLES.

Chard, 22d Jan. 1788.